

Conquer Triggers and Cues

Session Overview

This session focuses on effectively managing social cues for successful weight management.

Objectives for Session

1. Identify environmental cues that may affect your eating and physical activity
2. Learn how to control and respond to the cues
3. Develop a plan for successfully managing social cues

Session Preparation

- Prepare the following materials:
 - ☐ Handout B12 Emotions and Your Weight
 - ☐ Daily Food and Physical Activity Diary
 - ☐ B05 Yes, Now You're Doing It!
 - ☐ B20 Lose Weight by Planning Ahead
 - ☐ B24 Control Yourself!
 - ☐ B34 Eating With Others
 - ☐ B27 Involving Others in Your Weight Control Program
- Prepare yourself to encourage interaction and participation from the group, so the balance of talking rests with participants instead of the leader.
- As coach, your role is to facilitate discussion without lecturing.

Session Outline (60-minute class)

- Check-in (5 minutes)
- Discussion Topics (40 minutes)
- 5-Minute MOVE!® (5 minutes)
- Putting It All Together (10 minutes)

Check-in (5 minutes)

- Facilitate weigh-ins; enter weight into the CPRS Vital Signs package.
- Collect Daily Food and Physical Activity Diaries.

Discussion Topics (40 minutes)

Introduction

- Welcome everyone to the session.
- Review Ground Rules.
- Describe the purpose of today's class. State today's objectives and discussion topics. Encourage participants to attend all 16 sessions, since folks who attend more sessions lose more weight.
- Invite participants to discuss their homework, Daily Food and Physical Activity Diary, progress, and goals since the last class.
- Facilitate problem-solving for any barriers.

Discussion #1: What are social cues?

- Write "What are your daily triggers or cues for overeating or being less active?" on a flip chart. If necessary, give some examples to start the discussion, such as:
 - What you're feeling
 - What someone says
 - What you see
 - Certain places, activities, or events (for example, movies, TV, special occasions, vacations, etc.)

Suggest that to change a problem or habit, you can choose to:

Stay away from the problem (or keep it out of sight).

Brainstorm a different way to solve the problem.

- Ask participants what they can do to avoid or change the way they react to these cues (since environment, family, friends, and social outings will be discussed later in the session) and focus problem-solving on emotions that trigger eating (e.g., boredom, depressed mood, etc.). Review Handout B12 Emotions and Your Weight.

Discussion #2: Can I control the cues in my environment?

- Explain to the group that you are going to do a visual exercise (Home Makeover) to examine things at home that may trigger them to overeat or make poor food choices.
- Ask the group to visualize the following, eyes open or closed:

- *You have just opened your front door. You have a video camera and are taking a video of what's in the room. Which room are you in? Do you see any food in the room? Do you see anything that might make you think about eating, like a comfortable chair or a TV? Write down one thing that you could change to make it easier for you not to overeat in this room. Move from room to room. Are there other rooms that cause problems for you? For each problem that you see, write down how you might solve it by either putting it out of sight, avoiding it, or changing it so it becomes a healthier habit. Imagine the kitchen once again. Open the cabinets and the fridge. Do you see any foods that you know are not part of a healthy diet? List these on your paper. Since you are in charge, what could you do about these unhealthy foods?*
- Ask the group to choose one or two things that they would like to do to address problem cues they may have over the next week. Ask them to write this in their Daily Food and Physical Activity Diary as a goal for the next week. Remind participants to review handout B05 Yes, Now You're Doing It! as they create new goals.

5-Minute MOVE!® (5 minutes)

Incorporating physical activity into the session reinforces the healthy lifestyle message and provides an opportunity to demonstrate some simple but effective exercises.

Ask participants to join you, if they wish, in doing the following warm-up and flexibility exercise:

Invite participants to stand up and march in place for 2-3 minutes. If they cannot stand, invite them to lift their knees while seated, as if marching.

Then, after 2-3 minutes, invite them to perform the following:

CALF STRETCH:

Stand with hands against wall, arms outstretched and elbows straight.

Keeping your left knee slightly bent, toes of right foot slightly turned inward, step back 1-2 feet with right leg, heel, and foot flat on floor. You should feel a stretch in your calf muscle, but you shouldn't feel uncomfortable. If you don't feel a stretch, move your foot farther back until you do. Hold the position for 15-60 seconds. Repeat with the other leg.



Discussion #3: How should I respond to those cues (people and other) I encounter?

- Ask the following question: How does what other people say and do affect your eating and physical activity choices (positively or negatively)? Make a list of both positive and negative examples. Invite participants to come up with solutions to some of the problems discussed. Discuss feedback and use handouts B34 Eating With Others and B24 Control Yourself!.

Discussion #4: Is there a way to plan ahead for successful social encounters?

- Elicit ideas from the group about how to prepare.
- Use handouts B20 Lose Weight by Planning Ahead and B27 Involving Others in Your Weight Control Program to guide you through a discussion about planning for success.

Putting It All Together (10 minutes)

Session recap:

- Summarize key points discussed today.
- Review the handouts that generated the most discussion in today's session.
- Ask, "What was most helpful today? What could have been better?"

Goals and action planning for the next week:

- Ask Veterans to look at Handout B24, *Control Yourself!*, identify 1-2 tricks to manage food urges, and to try the tricks this next week.
- Request Veterans look at Handout B27, *Involving Others in Your Weight Control Program*, select one of the tips suggested that will work for them, and set a goal to implement it.
- Encourage participants to decide on one or two things they want to change in their environment over the next week. Tell them that you will discuss the changes they made and how those changes worked when you meet next week.

Homework for next week:

- Remind participants to continue logging in their Daily Food and Physical Activity Diary, and to bring the diary and their pedometer to every session.
- Provide information necessary for attending the next session (date/time/location, etc.).

Topic for next week:

- Maintain Your Momentum